

141057Z Mar 02

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ACTION INR-00

INFO LOG-00	NP-00	AF-00	A-00	ACQ-00	CIAE-00	INL-00
USNW-00	DODE-00	DS-00	EUR-00	UTED-00	VC-00	TEDE-00
LAB-01	VCE-00	NSAE-00	TEST-00	USIE-00	EPAE-00	IIP-00
DSCC-00	DRL-02	NFAT-00	SAS-00	/003W		

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FM AMEMBASSY HARARE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1207

INFO NSC WASHDC
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
AMEMBASSY WINDHOEK
AMEMBASSY GABORONE
AMEMBASSY LILONGWE
AMEMBASSY LONDON

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SIPDIS

AF/PD FOR COX AND ROBERTSON, AF/S FOR KRAFT AND
SCHLACHTER, AF/RA FOR SWANN, INR/R/MR, NSC FOR JENDAYI
FRAZER

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: ZI PREL PHUM
SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION MUGABE WINS POLL; HARARE

11. PRESIDENT ROBERT MUGABE'S VICTORY IN THE JUST-
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ENDED

PRESIDENTIAL POLL IN ZIMBABWE IS FODDER FOR
EDITORIALS PUBLISHED IN THE MARCH 14 EDITIONS OF
THE LEADING NEWSPAPERS IN THE COUNTRY. THE
EDITORIALS WERE UNANIMOUS IN CALLING ON PRESIDENT
ROBERT MUGABE TO ADDRESS THE PRIMARY CHALLENGES
FACING THE COUNTRY. EXCERPTS FOLLOW:

12. UNDER HEADLINE "BEYOND THE VOTE" THE INDEPENDENT
WEEKLY "THE FINANCIAL GAZETTE" (03/14) COMMENTS:

"THAT ZIMBABWE'S PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION WOULD NOT BE
FREE AND FAIR WAS NOT IN DOUBT FROM THE VERY START.
. . . THE UNEVEN PLAYING FIELD, MARKED BY THE
GOVERNMENT'S ABUSE OF THE STATE MEDIA, ITS USE OF
HASTILY CRAFTED UNDEMOCRATIC LAWS WHICH WERE
CHANGED VIRTUALLY EVERY HOUR TO SUIT ONE CANDIDATE,
ITS REFUSAL TO ACCEPT INDEPENDENT MONITORS AND
OBSERVERS AND ITS DECISION TO CUT POLLING STATIONS
IN URBAN AREAS, WAS BOUND TO PRODUCE A PRE-
DETERMINED RESULT. . . ZIMBABWEANS WHO VOTED IN
THEIR MILLIONS TO TRY TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE TO THEIR
HARROWING LIVES AND TO RESCUE THEIR COUNTRY FROM
ITS RAPID DESCENT INTO THE ABYSS WERE BOUND TO BE
DISAPPOINTED AND ANGERED, BUT THAT IS NOW WATER
UNDER THE BRIDGE. THEY WILL FIGHT ANOTHER DAY.
UNFORTUNATELY FOR ZIMBABWEANS, THE POLL RESULT
SPELLS MUCH MORE PAIN AND SUFFERING BECAUSE, FROM
NOW ON, THE ENTIRE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY WILL
TREAT THIS COUNTRY AS A PARIAH WHICH IT IS. . .
FOR PRESIDENT ROBERT MUGABE AND HIS BACKERS, THIS

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ELECTION WILL BE INTERPRETED AS A FINAL AND HEROIC
VINDICATION OF HIS BLACK NATIONALIST CREDENTIALS
AND HARD-LINE STANCE ON THE UNRESOLVED LAND
QUESTION WHICH HE SAYS HE MUST PUT TO REST ONCE AND
FOR ALL. MANY IN THE LAND AND BEYOND WILL BE
SEARCHING FOR CLUES TO SEE IF, IN HIS LAST
PRESIDENCY IF IT STANDS, HE WILL REDEEM HIMSELF AND
PULL HIS TROUBLED COUNTRY BACK FROM THE BRINK.

". . . MUGABE MUST NOW BEGIN TO CHART A NEW AND
DIFFERENT VISION FOR ZIMBABWE COMPARED TO THE ONE
HE RAMMED THROUGH THE NATION FOR TWO DECADES, NO
MATTER HOW LATE. HE MUST WORK ASSIDUOUSLY TO HEAL
A NATION DEEPLY FRACTURED BY BLOODY CONFLICT,
UNPRECEDENTED ECONOMIC RUIN AND MASS HUNGER IN ONE
OF AFRICA'S RICHEST COUNTRIES. HE MUST TAKE A LONG
PAUSE OVER HIS SEIZURE OF PRIVATE COMMERCIAL FARMS
AND INSTEAD LAUNCH TRANSPARENT, LEGAL AND FAIR LAND
REFORMS WHICH GUARANTEE FOOD SECURITY FOR ALL IN
THE LAND. . . HE MUST RE-LOOK THE MANY HURRIED LAWS

WHICH HE AUTHORIZED JUST BEFORE THE BALLOT. . .
. ABOVE ALL, HE MUST MOVE SWIFTLY AND DECISIVELY TO
RESTORE LAW AND ORDER AND PUNISH WITHOUT
COMPUNCTION ALL HIS FOLLOWERS WHO BECAME A LAW UNTO
THEMSELVES DURING AND BEFORE THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN.
. . . HE MAY ALSO WANT TO SERIOUSLY CONSIDER. . .
. FORMING A GOVERNMENT OF NATIONAL UNITY TO STAVE
OFF MORE BUT NEEDLESS BLOODSHED, PARTICULARLY GIVEN
THE HUGE DISSENTING VOTE RECORDED. . . WHETHER
ZIMBABWEANS AND THE WORLD EVENTUALLY ACCEPT
MUGABE'S DEEPLY FLAWED VICTORY WILL LARGEY DEPEND
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UPON HOW HE TACKLES THESE AND MANY OTHER
OUTSTANDING ISSUES WHICH CRY OUT FOR MORE THAN
URGENT ATTENTION. THE IMMEDIATE OUTLOOK FOR HIS
DAUNTING TASK IS VERY GRIM. . . ONE ONLY HOPES
THAT MUGABE WILL READ THE EXPLOSIVE MOOD WITHIN AND
OUTSIDE ZIMBABWE CORRECTLY AND ACT WISELY NOT JUST
FOR HIS SAKE BUT FOR ZIMBABWE.

13. UNDER HEADLINE "NATION BUILDING IS THE WORK OF
ALL," THE GOVERNMENT-CONTROLLED DAILY "THE HERALD"
(03/14) COMMENTS:

"NOW THAT THE ISSUE OF THE POLITICAL LEADERSHIP OF
THE COUNTRY HAS BEEN SETTLED FOLLOWING YESTERDAY'S
DECLARATION OF MUGABE AS THE PRESIDENT OF THE
REPUBLIC OF ZIMBABWE, AFTER THREE DAYS OF POLLING,
IT IS TIME NOW FOR THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY TO WORK
WITH THE GOVERNMENT IN NATION BUILDING. THERE IS
NO DENYING THE FACT THAT THE PRIVATE SECTOR, LIKE
ANY OTHER ORDINARY ZIMBABWEANS, HAD TAKEN POLITICAL
POSITIONS. BUSINESS HAD ALMOST GROUND TO A HALT AS

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	USNW-00	DODE-00	DS-00	EUR-00	UTED-00	VC-00	TEDE-00
	LAB-01	VCE-00	NSAE-00	TEST-00	USIE-00	EPAE-00	IIP-00
	DSCC-00	DRL-02	NFAT-00	SAS-00	/003W		
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FM AMEMBASSY HARARE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1208
INFO NSC WASHDC
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
AMEMBASSY WINDHOEK
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SIPDIS

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MOST PROGRAMS HAD BEEN SUSPENDED BUT FOCUS SHOULD
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NOW SHIFT TOWARDS SOLVING THE ECONOMIC PROBLEMS
AFFLICTING THE COUNTRY. . . WITH THE ELECTORATE
MANDATING MUGABE TO LEAD THE COUNTRY FOR THE NEXT
SIX YEARS, POLITICAL AFFILIATIONS SHOULD NOW BE PUT
ASIDE AS THE GOVERNMENT, THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY AND
ORDINARY CITIZENS PUT HEADS TOGETHER IN SEEKING
SOLUTIONS TO THE COUNTRY'S ECONOMIC WOES. . . THE
RE-ELECTION OF PRESIDENT MUGABE SHOULD NOW SEE
BUSINESS PEOPLE COMING OUT OF THEIR SHELLS TO TAKE
FIRM POSITIONS IN NATION BUILDING. NOW IS THE TIME
TO MOVE FORWARD IN THE ENDEAVOR TO PROP UP THE
ECONOMY AND THIS REQUIRES THE INVOLVEMENT OF ALL
CITIZENS REGARDLESS OF POLITICAL AFFILIATION. . .
WE ARE CONFIDENT THAT THE GOVERNMENT WILL LISTEN TO
THE CONCERN OF THE PRIVATE SECTOR AND THE PEOPLE
AND MOVE SWIFTLY TO ADDRESS THE PROBLEMS. WE ARE
QUITE SURE THE GOVERNMENT WILL NOT BE FOUND WANTING
IN THIS REGARD. . . WE ALL AGREE THAT THE
SITUATION IS BAD BUT THE PROBLEMS ARE NOT
INSURMOUNTABLE. IF THE PRIVATE SECTOR AND THE
GOVERNMENT WORK TOGETHER IN MAPPING OUT SURVIVAL

STRATEGIES, WE WILL NOT GO WRONG. . . ."

14. UNDER HEADLINE "PRESIDENT FACES DAUNTING TASK," A SPECIAL EDITION OF THE GOVERNMENT-CONTROLLED DAILY "THE HERALD" DEDICATED ITS MARCH 13 FRONT PAGE EDITORIAL TO ENCOURAGING ZIMBABWEANS TO TURN THEIR "SWORDS INTO PLOUGHSHARES" AND "RALLY BEHIND" PRESIDENT ROBERT MUGABE IN REBUILDING THE NATION AFTER A HOTLY-CONTESTED PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION.
EXCERPTS:

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"THE MOST BITTERLY FOUGHT ELECTION SINCE INDEPENDENCE IS OVER. PRESIDENT MUGABE HAS WON A NEW MANDATE. HIS WIN WAS COMFORTABLE AND DECISIVE. HOWEVER, AS HE PREPARES FOR A NEW SIX-YEAR TERM OF OFFICE, HE DOES SO AGAINST THE BACKDROP OF A HIGHLY POLARIZED NATION. FOR TWO YEARS ZIMBABWE HAS BEEN IN THE MIDDLE OF AN ELECTION CAMPAIGN THAT RESEMBLED A BATTLEFIELD OR A CIVIL CONFLICT. HAVING OVERCOME THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE OF HIS POLITICAL CAREER, THE PRESIDENT FACES THE DAUNTING TASK OF BRINGING TOGETHER A DIVIDED NATION THAT HAS FOR YEARS EXISTED UNDER A FACADE OF RACIAL HARMONY AND ECONOMIC PROSPERITY WHILE HIDING THE DEEP DIVISIONS BETWEEN WHITE AND BLACK COUNTRYMEN AND THE GROWING POVERTY AMONG ITS PEASANTRY. . . THE CHALLENGE IS BRIDGING THE GAP BETWEEN THE RICH COMMERCIAL FARMERS. . . AND THE POOR MAJORITY WHO HAVE WAITED FOR OVER 20 YEARS TO RECLAIM THE COUNTRY TO MOVE FORWARD. FOR AS LONG AS THE MDC LEADER, MORGAN TSVANGIRAI, CONTINUES TO ASSUME THE POSTURE OF A GUERRILLA LEADER AND NOT AN OPPPOSITION LEADER, THE OUTSIDE FORCES THAT HAVE SUBJECTED THIS COUNTRY TO THE MOST TORRID TIMES WILL HAVE AN EXCUSE TO PERPETUATE THEIR NEFAIRIOUS ACTIVITIES. THE FIGHTING IS OVER AND IT IS TIME TO REBUILD THE COUNTRY LOOKING AT THE REALITIES THAT CONFRONT THIS NATION. WE CANNOT AFFORD TO BURY OUR HEADS IN THE SAND AND PRETEND THAT THERE ARE NO FUNDAMENTAL ISSUES THAT ARE CRYING OUT TO BE REDRESSED.

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"THE QUESTION OF LAND WAS THE MAJOR CAMPAIGN ISSUE IN THIS ELECTION, WHICH WAS AFFIRMED BY THE MAJORITY OF THE ELECTORATE WHO VOTED FOR PRESIDENT MUGABE. . . IT IS NOW INCUMBENT UPON ALL THE PLAYERS TO ACCEPT THIS REALITY. . . THE REALITY IS THAT LAND REFORM CAN NOT BE REVERSED. . . THE FOLLOWING FEW DAYS WILL BE TELLING IN TERMS OF THE DIRECTION THE COUNTRY WILL BE TAKING. THE CRUCIAL POINT, HOWEVER, IS THAT IT IS NO LONGER NECESSARY FOR CITIZEN TO BE FIGHTING CITIZEN. LET US ALL RALLY BEHIND THE PRESIDENT AND TURN OUR SWORDS INTO PLOUGHSHARES. THE VIOLENCE THAT MARRED THE POLITICAL PROCESS OVER THE LAST TWO YEARS WAS WRONG. . . WE NEED TO LEARN AS A COUNTRY TO OPERATE A NORMAL TWO-PARTY SYSTEM. THIS DOES REQUIRE A GENERAL ACCEPTANCE OF DEMOCRATIC RULES. THE TWO MOST VITAL ARE THAT LOSERS SHOULD ACCEPT THAT THERE IS A PERMANENT OPPOSITION GENERATING NEW IDEAS AND WAITING FOR THE GOVERNMENT TO MAKE A MISTAKE. IN OTHER WORDS, A MAJORITY PARTY AND AN OPPOSITION PARTY SHOULD NOT SEE EACH OTHER AS

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UNCLAS SECTION 03 OF 03 HARARE 000672

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E.O. 12958: N/A

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ENEMIES. THEY ARE OPPONENTS, AND POLITICS IS NOT
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AN OCCUPATION FOR THE THIN-SKINNED OR FAINT-
HEARTED. BUT THERE ARE RULES AND THESE RULES
SHOULD BE FOLLOWED."

SULLIVAN

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